

THE GUILD OF ST. BARNABAS

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SOMETHING MORE ABOUT AMBROISE PARÉ

"LET the surgeon be well educated, skilful, ready, and courteous. Let him be bold in those things that are safe, fearful in those that are dangerous; avoiding all evil methods and practices. Let him be tender to the sick, honorable to men of his profession, wise in his predictions; chaste, sober, pitiful, merciful; not covetous or extortionate, but rather let him take his wages in moderation, according to his work, the wealth of his patient, the issue of the disease, and his own worth."

These words were penned by Guy de Chanliac in his "*Grande Chirurgie*" in 1363 and form no bad model for the conduct of a surgeon in this enlightened age. I dare say we all read the interesting selection from the "*Life and Times of Ambroise Paré*" given in the January *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING*, and the book itself is well worth reading, as is also the series of articles on the same subject which began in October, 1901, in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, and continued through several numbers.

Besides being the most famous surgeon of his time, Paré had the art of graphic narrative, and his racy accounts of the travels and cures of his eventful life are full of interest. Nothing could be more fixed and dogmatic than medicine and surgery in his day, and as dissection was forbidden and anatomy thus unknown, the learned doctors of those days clung to the theories of the schoolmen and covered their ignorance by dark discourses of essences, vapors, and humors which affected the human body. Paracelsus, indeed, dared to use freedom of thought, burned some of the books in use, and lectured in German, but his judgment was poor and he did not carry out the promise of his beginning.

In Paré's time (he was born in 1510) a dreadful war waged between the physicians, surgeons, and barber-surgeons. The latter were unlearned men, who performed their work in blood-letting and what other *minor surgery* fell to their share in strict accordance with the traditions of their fathers. Paré was, after a very partial instruction in Latin by an old priest, apprenticed to one of these, and as apprentices were expected to rise before daylight, sweep the shop, and make ready for customers, run about all day to the houses of wealthy patrons, and were, we are told, often fed on bread and water and had no time to study except at night, when they were too tired and sleepy to do much, we fear his path was beset by many thorns. Lectures were sometimes given to these young aspirants at four o'clock in the morning! At last Paré became a master barber-surgeon, and afterwards got an appointment as interne at the *Hôtel Dieu*, where he gained considerable experience, and then went to the wars, not being attached to the army but simply a follower of it, getting what he could to do and paid by the job! The great lords who followed the King had their own surgeons, who

were priests, while various barber-surgeons and dressers, both men and women, crowded the camp. The treatment of gunshot wounds in those days was most cruel. As the lead of the bullets was supposed to be poisonous, boiling oil was introduced into the wounds. One day Paré found the oil had given out, and he applied instead a paste of yolks of eggs, rose oil, and turpentine. All night, he says, he lay awake, sure that the men so treated would be dead before morning from the poison of their wounds. On visiting them in the morning, however, he found them comfortable and the wounds clean, while the other soldiers who had been treated with the barbarous method then in vogue were in a high fever and the wounds all black. After this he never again used the oil. When Paré had become famous, he was admitted to the College of St. Côme, the stronghold of the exclusive surgeons of his day; he says himself he could not have passed the examination, but it was all arranged beforehand and everything made easy for him. In this hospital he did much dissecting, and says that he once divided a cadaver lengthways and dissected half of it, keeping the other half for twenty-seven years, from which we see that he must have understood the art, of embalming. Paré was surgeon to four successive Kings of France and was by them lent to foreign potentates and great nobles. His cure of one of these is shown by the extract published in the January JOURNAL before referred to. One of his most famous patients was the Duc de Guise, who was wounded by a spear, which went through his head and the point came out the other side, the shaft of the weapon being broken off. The steel was so embedded and so near the duke's eye that no surgeon would attempt to remove it, fearing the eye must come too. Paré took a pair of smith's pincers and, asking his noble patient's permission to place his foot against the head to get a purchase, he drew out the spear-point so delicately that the muscles of the eye received no injury. The duke recovered and bore to his death the scar of the wound, which gave him the nickname of François le Balafre. Paré must have been a man of infinite patience as well as skill. All the common people and soldiers loved him, it is said, and he was, too, a man of open and ready speech and dared to give his opinion to the grand seigneurs of the time.

We are told, as an example of his patience, that he once tried for two years to get from a famous surgeon of Furin the receipt for a balm for wounds. It hardly seems worth the trouble to us, as it consisted of oil of lilies, in which had been boiled young whelps just born and earthworms prepared with Venetian turpentine. Stag's horn was a sovereign remedy in this time, and Paré wrote against it, considering it a superstition; it was certainly a costly one, as we find from the constituents of the so-called electuaire de madame, destined for an abbess who was ill. Powdered pearls, powdered coral, powdered stag's horn, and stag's heart formed this delectable compound, which was ordered to be gilded with fine gold and was supposed to "mineralize and polypify the body of madame." It cost four pounds.

Besides Paré's skill in the treatment of gunshot wounds, he was the first surgeon of his time to use the ligature in closing arteries instead of the cautery, as his contemporaries did. He was also very successful in trephining in fractures of the skull.

He wrote many books and lived to a good old age, respected and loved, though, of course, he had his enemies. Dumas in his fascinating novel, translated under the title of "*Marguerite de Valois*," represents his heroine, the brilliant and learned but licentious queen of Henry IV., as a pupil of Paré. Whether this is true or not we cannot say, but what with national wars, public

brawls, and private quarrels, the art of the surgeon was bound to flourish "in the brave days of old."

BOSTON BRANCH.—The March meeting of the Guild of St. Barnabas was held at St. Stephen's, April 2, as the regular time of holding it fell in Holy Week.

Our chaplain in his address spoke on the rule of life, saying that it comprised the whole duty of a Christian,—our duty to God and to man,—and in taking his place for the first time expressed his readiness to help us all, and hoped that we would always feel at liberty to apply to him.

During the social hour afterwards an Easter-egg hunt was indulged in.

The April meeting was held in the same place on April 3. Mr. Bishop spoke of the services for St. Barnabas's Day, and said that he would gladly arrange to have the Celebration of Holy Communion at whatever hour would be most convenient for the nurses, and urged that as many as possible be present. It was decided to have the service at the usual hour, seven A.M., at St. Stephen's Church, with special supplication for the Guild of St. Barnabas.

We then adjourned to the church, where the service was conducted by the chaplain, who spoke in his address of the use and beauty of true and loving service and the danger in all callings of degenerating into professionalism. A social hour in the Parish House followed.

We are sure it will interest the members of our branch to hear of the marriage of Miss Gussie Wright to Mr. Hocken, of Chatham, N. B. Miss Folger is now in charge of the Vincent Memorial Hospital, and we have cheerful accounts of Miss Battelle, who has been at the Coronado Hotel all winter.

HARTFORD, CONN.—The hundred and first meeting of the guild in Hartford was held April 9. The service was at Trinity Church at eight-fifteen P.M. The chaplain gave a brief but interesting history of the guild, especially of the Hartford Branch, as appropriate to this time—the beginning of the second hundred of our regular meetings, which opened with a service and an address, followed with the business of the guild and a social hour. At the suggestion of Mrs. Montigue, who was at that time secretary of the New York Branch, Dr. Hart started this branch in 1892. He met a number of ladies interested in the subject in the lecture-room of the hospital on March 5, and the branch was organized then, with Dr. Hart as chaplain, Miss M. C. Huntington, secretary, and Miss Ellen W. Gray, treasurer. On the 15th of the same month the first service was held at Christ Church Chapel, thirteen associates and twenty-eight nurses being admitted as charter members. During the ten years one hundred and forty-one nurses and twenty-four associates have been admitted. Of the associates, two have died, three have resigned, and two, who were heads of the Training-School, have taken their places among the nurses; of the nurses, twenty-two have resigned, seven have been transferred to other branches, fourteen have been dropped for various causes, and eight have died. We now have our chaplain, one priest associate (the Bishop of Connecticut), seventeen associates, and ninety-one nurses. The chaplain said that it had been a great gratification to him that he had been able to officiate at all but six of the hundred meetings (these absences were owing to his necessary attendance upon the General Convention of the Church and other unavoidable causes). He also has officiated and made addresses at the early Communion services for the guild during the ten years, on the Feast of St. Barnabas, and for seven years at a Christmas Eve service in St.

John's Church. The pastoral duties connected with the guild had been a great pleasure to him, but he felt regret and sorrow that he had not been able to do more for the members individually. He closed with expressing his satisfaction in having this anniversary come in the Easter season, and drew from the thoughts which belong to the season and its services valuable lessons for our lives.

Miss Winifred Hardiman was admitted to membership in the guild at this service. A short business meeting was held in the beautiful Parish Room, and then we all heartily enjoyed the entertainment provided by the committee (consisting of Mrs. T. B. Beach, Mrs. J. J. Nairn, and Miss Morgan), of recitations by Mr. J. J. Nairn, given in his own inimitable way, and songs delightfully rendered by Mr. Marvin. The supper-table was also most attractively decorated with a border of orange-colored mandarins, each one surmounted by a tiny yellow duckling.

PROVIDENCE.—The April meeting of the guild was held at St. Stephen's Church on Thursday afternoon, April 3, with a gratifying attendance.

The Guild Office was said in the chapel by the chaplain, and Miss Jessie L. Clauson, matron of the Whitmarsh Hospital, and Miss Rose Linden were admitted as active members.

The guild then adjourned to the guild room for the business meeting, which was followed by an address by the chaplain and a tea provided by one of the associates.



THE parish priest of Austerity
Climbed up a high church steeple
To be nearer God, so that he might hand
His Word down to the people.
And in sermon script he daily wrote
What he thought was sent from Heaven,
And dropped it down on the people's heads
Two times one day in seven.
In his age, God said, "Come down and die!"
And he cried from out the steeple,—
"Where art thou, Lord?"
"Down here among my people!"

—BISHOP COXE.